



### **Francis Eaton: Mayflower passenger**

"The names of those which came over first, in the year 1620, and were by the blessing of God the first beginners and in a sort the foundation of all the Plantations and Colonies in new England; and their families...

"Francis Eaton and Sarah his wife, and Samuel their son, a young child."

William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation 1620-1647*, ed. Samuel Eliot Morison (New York: Knopf, 1991), p. 441-3.

### **Francis Eaton: signer of the Mayflower Compact**

"I shall ... begin with a combination made by them before they came ashore ; being the first foundation of their government in this place. Occasioned partly by the discontented and mutinous speeches that some of the strangers amongst them had let fall from them in the ship: That when they came ashore they would use their own liberty, for none had power to command them, the patent they had being for Virginia and not for New England ... And partly that such an act by them done, this their condition considered, might be as firm as any patent, and in some respects more sure.

"The form was as followeth: IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God of Great Britain, France and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, etc. Having undertaken, for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith and Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the First Colony in the Northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one of another, Covenant and Combine ourselves together into a Civil Body Politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute and frame such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the 11th of November, in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, of England, France and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. Anno Domini 1620."  
Samuel Eliot Morison (New York: Knopf, 1991), p. 75-76.

### **Francis Eaton and the 1623 Division of Land**

The 1623 Division of Land marked the end of the Pilgrims' earliest system of land held in common by all. Governor Bradford explains it in this way:

"And so assigned to every family a parcel of land, according to the proportion of their number, for that end, only for present use (but made no division for inheritance) and ranged all boys and youth under some family. This had very good success, for it made all hands very industrious, so as

much more corn was planted than otherwise would have been by any means the Governor or any other could use, and saved him a great deal of trouble, and gave far better content. The women now went willingly into the field, and took their little ones with them to set corn; which before would allege weakness and inability; whom to have compelled would have been thought great tyranny and oppression."

William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation 1620-1647*, ed. Samuel Eliot Morison (New York: Knopf, 1991), p. 120.

PLYMOUTH COLONY RECORDS, DEEDS, &C., VOL. I 1627-1651 is the oldest record book of the Plymouth settlement. It begins with the 1623 Division of Land, recorded in the handwriting of Governor William Bradford.

***Plymouth Colony Records, Deeds, &c., Vol. I 1627-1651*** is the oldest record book of the Plymouth settlement. It begins with the 1623 division of land, recorded in the handwriting of Governor William Bradford. The lands of Francis Eaton are described as "these lye one the north side of the towne next adjoyning to their gardens which came in the Fortune. Francis Eaton...4."

### **Francis Eaton & the 1627 Division of Cattle**

***Plymouth Colony Records, Deeds, &c., Vol. I 1627-1651*** tells of the 1627 division of cattle: "At a publicque court held the 22th of May it was concluded by the whole Companie, that the cattell wch were the Companies, to wit, the Cowes and the Goates should be equally devided to all the psonts of the same company ... & so the lotts fell as followeth, thirteene psonts being pportioned to one lot..."

"The tenth lot fell to ffrancis Eaton & those Joyned wth him his 2) wife Christian Eaton 3) Samuell Eaton 4) Rahell Eaton 5) Stephen Tracie 6) Triphosa Tracie 7) Sarah Tracie 8) Rebecka Tracie 9) Ralph Wallen 10) Joyce Wallen 11) Sarah Morton 12) ~~Edward Fludd~~ 12) Robert Hilton Bartlet 13) Tho: Prence. To this lott fell an heyfer of the last yeare called the white belyd heyfer & two shee goats.

### **Francis Eaton: a 1626 Purchaser**

"Isaac Allerton negotiated in England an agreement dated 26 October 1626 between the Adventurers and himself as 'one of the planters resident at Plymouth afforesaid, assigned, and sent over as agent for the rest of the planters ther,' whereby the adventurers for £1,800 sold to the planters, later known as the Purchasers, all the 'said stocks, shares, lands, merchandise, and chatles' which had belonged to the Adventurers. The list we have of the Purchaser is from the PCR 2:177, and was obviously compiled sometime after the 1626 agreement, for Richard Warren died in 1628, and his wife replaced him on the list, and John Billington was hanged in 1630, and his share is represented on the list by his surname only. Though the following year the fifty-eight Purchasers in turn assigned both the shares in the company and the debt to the eight Plymouth and four London Undertakers, the list of Purchasers continued to be an important one for, in general, these people were privileged above all others in future land grants in the colony. The list, consisting of fifty-three Plymouth names plus the names of five London men, is as follows: 'The Names of the Purchasers. Mr Wm Bradford Mr. Thom Prence Mr Wm Brewster... Franc Eaton..."

Eugene A. Stratton, *Plymouth Colony, Its History & People 1620-1691* (Salt Lake City: Ancestry Publishing, 1986), p. 419-420.

## Francis Eaton in the Plymouth Colony Records

**25 January 1631:** "ffranes Eaton of Plymouth abovesd hath sold unto Edw: Wynslow of the same four acres of land lying in the north field between the lands of Capt Myles Standish on the South side & one acre due unto Henry Sampson on the North for & in Consideraco of the second Cow calfe shall fall unto the said Edw: after the date of this prnt vizt the 25 of June 1631. The sd Edw: to deliver the same at the age of six moneths & if it miscarry before then a 3d &c till paymt be made according to the tenure of this prnt. The sd ffrances binding himself & heires, to confirme the said moeties of land to the said Edw: Wynslow & his heires for ever.  
FRANCES EATEN.

Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. 12, p. 16.

**9 May 1631:** "Experience Michell, sould nto Samuell Eddy his dwelling house garden plott & fence, wth all things nailefast in ye same; for ye summe of twelfe pounds starling, as apears more at large by a writing vnder their hands, to which ffrances Eaton was witnes."

Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. 12, p. 18.

**30 December 1631:** "Frances Eaton of New Plimoth , hath sould vnto mr William Brewster of the same towne, one share of land, containing twenty Acers, lying at the place comonly called Nothingelse, next ajnying to the land of the said William Brewster lying to the north thereof on the one side And haueing the resedew of the land of the foresaid Frances Eaton lying to the soward therof: for & in Consideration that the said William Brewster, shall pay his purchas for four shars which comes to .21 li .12 s sterling; the which the said William Brewster doth bind himselfe by these presentes to discharge, & free the said Francis Eaton wholly of the same. & the same Francis Eaton doth likewise by these presents confeirme, for him, his heirs, & exsecutores for euer the said portion of land abouesaid, to the said William brewster to him & his heires for euer. in witnes wherof they haue hearunto put their hands. the day & year aboue written.  
Frances Eaten.

Moreouer the year, & day aboue written, the said Francis Eaton of Plimoth aforesaid, hath sould other twelfe Acers of land lying in the aforsaid place at Nothingells, next adjonying to the foresaid portion, aboue mentioned, & bounded as before; for & in consideration of the sume of .10li. pound sterling; allredy paid by the said William Brewster, to the aforesaid Francies Eaton. And therefore the said William Brewster is to haue & to hould, the abouesaid portion of .12. Acers of land, to him & his heires for euer, in witnes whereof the said Francis Eaton hath put to his hand.

FRANCES EATEN."

Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. 12, p. 16-17.

**1633:** "The Names of the Freemen of the Incorporacon of Plymoth in New England, An: 1633. Edward Wynslow, Govr., Capt Myles Standish, William bradford, John Howland, John Alden, John Done, Stephen Hopkins, william gilson, Isaack Allerton, Thomas Prence, Raph Smith, William Brewster, Samuell Fuller, senior, John Jenny, Robt Hickes, Manasseh Kempton, William Wright, Frances Cooke, Frances Eaton..."

Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. 1, p. 3.

**3 January 1632-3:** "William Bennet complayned of Edw. Dowty to haue dealt fraudulently wth him about a flich of bacon he was to haue at the rate of three pownds of beaver, wch being viewed was esteemed but at halfe the value, & to be made good in beaver or so much bacon as Robt Heekes & Frances eaton should thinke meete betweene man & man.

2. The said plaintiffe, having sold the defendt a pcell of boards for beaver, demaunded prnt pay. The matter being heard, it was determined that the deft should pay him so much bacon in hand as the foresaid Robt & Frances should value to be worth three pounds of beaver, and the remainder

to be paid by the said Edw. at or before the first of March next ensuing to Richard Church of Plymouth aforesaid, being the assigne of the said Will Bennet; and for default of paymt, upon the desire of the said Willi: or his assigne, to haue order to straine.  
Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. 1, p. 7.

**8 January 1623-3:** "Frances Eaton acknowledgeth that he hath sold to Kanelm & Josias Wynslow the now dwelling howse of the said Frances, wth other appurtenances therunto belonging, expressed in a covt between them; the possession whereof the said Frances is to deliver unto the said Kanelme & Josias at or before the first of March next ensuing, for & in consideracon of twenty-six ownds, to be pd according to covts bearing date the day of this prnt; the sd Frances warranting the same to be free from him, his his heirs, &c, or any intanglemt wtsoever, to them & their heires for ever."  
Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. 1, p. 8.

**22 January 1633-4:** "Whereas Kanelm Wynslow & Josias Wynslow, by a joynt purchase, bought of Frances Eaton his then dwelling, as appeareth p contract bearing date the 8<sup>th</sup> of Jan., 1632, the said Josias hath sold unto the said Kanelm his pt of the said purchase..."  
Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. 1, p. 23

**25 March 1633:** "According to an order in Court held the 2d of January, in the seaventh yeare of the raigne of or soveraigne lord, Charles, by the grace of God King of Engl., Scot., France, & Irel., defendor of the faith, &c, the psons heere under menconed were rated for publike use by the Govr, Mr Will Bradford, Capt Myles Standish, Joh: Alden, Joh: Howland, John Done, Stephen Hopkins, Will Gilson, Sam Fuller Senior, John Genny, Godbert Godbertson, & Jonathan Brewster, to be brought in by each pso as they are heere under written, rated in corne at vi s p bushel, at or before the last of November next ensuing, to such place as shall be heereafter appointed to receiue the same. And for default heereof, the value to be doubled, & accordingly leaved by the publick offer for yt end

	<i>L</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>d</i>
Edward Wynslow, Govr	02:	05:	00
Mr. Will Bradford	01:	16:	00 ...
Frances Eaton	00:	09:	00

Records of Plymouth Colony, Vol. 1, p. 9.

**1 July 1633** [distribution of hay land by the Court]: "It. To Mr. William yt wch Fr. Eaton cutt last yeare, except yt at the uppr path, wth some by him at home. It. To Christopher Wadsworth & Will Wright where they mowed last yeare, & at the uppr path where Frances Eaton mowed last yeare.  
Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. 1, p. 15.

**1660 re the Purchasers of Dartmouth:** "Att a generall meeting of the Purchasers att Plymouth the seaventh of march 1652 It was ordered and fully agreed unto and Concluded by the whole that all that Tract and tracts of lands lying from the Purchassers bounds on the west side of Acoughcusse to a river called Accusshaneck and three miles to the Eastwards of the same ; with all llands meddows woods waters rivers Creekes and all appurtenances therunto belonging Should bee given to those whose names are heerunder written Containing thirty four shares and was then given allotted Assigned and sett over to them by the whole to have and to hold to them and their heires and Assignes for ever ; to Devide and Dispose of the same as they should see

good ; and they are to Satisfy the Indians for the Purchase therof and to beare all other Due Charges that shall any way arise about the same According to their severall rpoortions ... ffrancis Eaton [et al.]

Mayflower Descendant, Vol. 4, p. 185-188.

[Francis Eaton was entitled to a share in this land as a Purchaser.]

### **Francis Eaton: His marriages, children and death**

as written by Governor William Bradford c1650

"Francis Eaton his first wife died in the general sickness. And he married again and his second wife died, and he married the third and had by her three children. One of them is married and hath a child. The others are living but one of them is an idiot. He died about 16 years ago. His son Samuel who came over a sucking child, is also married and hath a child."

William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation 1620-1647*, ed. Samuel Eliot Morison (New York: Knopf, 1991), p. 446.

NOTE: Francis Eaton's first wife, Sarah [last name unknown] died at Plymouth early in 1621. His second wife, name unknown, who is sometimes thought to have been the unnamed maid servant of Governor John Carver, also soon died. He married Christian Penn in 1624 or 1625. Francis Eaton died at Plymouth in November of 1633 without a will. After his death, as was mandated by law and custom, an inventory of his estate was taken.

### **Francis Eaton: the consequences of his death**

25 November 1633: 'That whereas Frances Eaton, carpenter, late of Plymouth, deceased, dyed indebted far more then the estate of the said Frances would make good, insomuch as Christian, his late wife, durst not administer, it was ordered, that Mr Thomas Prence & mr John Done, in the behalfe of the Court should enter upon the estate, acording to the inventory brought in upon oath the day of this prnt, that the creditors might haue so far as the estate will make good, & the widow be freed & acquitted from any claime or demands of all or any his creditors whatsoever."

Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. 1, p. 20.

11 February 1635-6: "Benjamine Eaton, ye sone of Francis Eaton, of late deseased, was, by ye Gouer & Assistantes, with his mothers consente, put to Bridgett Fuller, widow, for 14 year, shee being to keep him at schoole 21 years, & to imploy him after in shuch seruice as she saw good & he should be fitt for; but not to turne him ouer to any other, without ye Gouer consente."

Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. 1, p. 37.

5 July 1636: "Samuell Eaton, the sonne of Fr. Eaton, late of Plym, deceased, by the consent & approbacon of Christian, his mother in law, hath bownd himselfe apprentize to John Cooke the younger for & during the full terme of seaven yeares, to begin at the first of october next ensuing."

Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. 1, p. 43.